

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

The Office Action dated May 5, 2006 has been carefully considered. Claims 22, 24-32 and 34-43 are pending in the application, with claims 1 and 43 being the only independent claims. Claims 22, 27, 28, 30, 34-37 and 40 have been amended. Claims 23 and 33 have been canceled, without prejudice. Claim 43 has been added. Reconsideration of the application, as amended herein and in view of the following remarks, is respectfully requested.

The disclosure stands objected to because (a) the Abstract contains expressions such as "invention," "said" and "means;" and (b) paragraph beginning on page 1, line 18 and paragraph beginning on page 6, line 13 (both of which were amended in the September 10, 2004 Preliminary Amendment) contain informalities. The Abstract and the above-identified two paragraphs have been amended to address the informalities identified in the Office Action. In view of these amendments, withdrawal of the objection to the disclosure is respectfully requested.

Claims 28, 30, 35 and 40 stand objected to because of informalities therein. These claims have been amended to address the informalities identified in the Office Action. Withdrawal of the objection to claims 28, 30, 35 and 40 is therefore respectfully requested.

Claim 22 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as unpatentable over Wiebe (U.S. Patent No. 2,149,375) in view of DE 297 07 200 (DE '200). Claim 22 has been amended to include the subject matter of now canceled claims 23 and 33, and now recites

"said slanted end surface of said at least one of the first and second fitting halves being part of the door stop, and

wherein said knob of said at least one of said first and second fitting halves comprises an upper knob part and a lower knob part, said lower knob part being made of a material having a lower Shore hardness or being coated with the material having a lower Shore hardness than said upper knob part."

Applicants respectfully submit that amended claim 22 is patentable over Wiebe in view of DE '200 because the combination of Wiebe and DE '200 fails to teach or suggest all of the limitations of amended claim 22. In particular, the combination of Wiebe and DE '200 fails to teach or suggest the above-quoted recitations of amended claim 22.

Wiebe discloses a generally cylindrically shaped doorknob 8 which has an annular groove on its outer front edge and a large spherically shaped cavity 11. An annular rubber bumper 17 is inserted in the annular groove. A soft rubber ball 13 is installed in the cavity 11 so that part of the rubber ball 13 is spread to the outside of the cavity 11 to form an annular bumper flange 15. The bumper flange 15 can function as a door stop. See Figs. 1-3; and col. 1, line 37 to col. 2, line 6 of Wiebe. Wiebe discloses an annular surface which is slanted from the bumper 17 toward the bumper flange 15. As clearly illustrated in Fig. 3 of Wiebe, however, this slanted surface is on the doorknob 8, not on the bumper flange 15 or the rubber ball 13. In other words, this slanted surface is not part of the door stop. Therefore, Wiebe fails to teach or suggest the recitation of "said slanted end surface of said at least one of the first and second fitting halves being part of the door stop," as expressly recited in amended claim 22.

Furthermore, as clearly shown in Figs. 1-3 of Wiebe, the doorknob 8 forms an annular member completely surrounding the bumper flange 15. In other words, the doorknob 8 is disposed both above and below the bumper flange 15. Thus, contrary to the Examiner's interpretation, the doorknob 8 does not qualify as an upper knob part, and the bumper flange 15 or the rubber ball 13 does not qualify as a lower knob part. Wiebe therefore also fails to teach or suggest the recitation of "wherein said knob of said at least one of said first and second fitting halves comprises an upper knob part and a lower knob part, said lower knob part being made of a

material having a lower Shore hardness or being coated with the material having a lower Shore hardness than said upper knob part,” as expressly recited in amended claim 22.

DE ‘200 fails to supply what is missing from Wiebe because the doorknob of DE ‘200 has neither a slanted end surface nor upper and lower knob parts of different materials (see Fig. 2, 4 and 7 of DE ‘200). Thus, the combination of Wiebe and DE ‘200 fails to teach or suggest all of the limitations of amended claim 22.

In view of the foregoing, withdrawal of the 35 U.S.C. §103(a) rejection of claim 22 is respectfully requested.

Dependent claims 24-32 and 34-42 and new independent claim 43 are patentable for at least the same reasons that independent claim 22 is patentable, as well as for the additional limitations recited therein.


In particular, it is noted that neither Wiebe nor DE ‘200 teaches or suggests the recitation of “wherein the end surface of the at least one of the knobs comprises a first end surface on the upper knob part and a slanted second end surface which is on the lower knob part and extends outward from the first end surface in a direction further away from the other of the knobs so that the lower knob part is operable to function as a door stop,” as expressly recited in claim 43. As shown in Fig. 3 of Wiebe, the bumper flange 15 of Wiebe does not have a slanted end surface which extends outward from the slanted surface of the doorknob 8 in a direction further away from the other knob. As discussed above, DE ‘200 does not even have a slanted end surface.

In view of all of the above, applicants respectfully submit that the application is in condition for allowance, and such action is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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